

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

- 1 1. (Currently amended) A computer-implemented method of facilitating a
2 distributed search for a procurement request, comprising:
3 receiving the procurement request from a user;
4 requesting a remote supplier to conduct a remote search to satisfy the
5 procurement request;
6 initiating a local search of a local information source;
7 receiving results of the remote search;
8 filtering results of the remote search by applying organizational
9 procurement controls to the results of the remote search, wherein the
10 organizational procurement controls include at least one of, an upper limit on a
11 price, an upper limit on a quantity, a prohibition against a given supplier, a limit to
12 a given brand, a limit to a given model, a limit on a delivery option, and a limit on
13 payment terms, and wherein the remote information source comprises an
14 electronic marketplace, whereby the organizational procurement controls can be
15 applied to results of the remote search which is performed by the remote supplier;
16 merging said remote search results with results of the local search; and
17 presenting said merged search results to the user.
- 1 2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 filtering said remote search results with a set of local rules.

1 3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein said filtering comprises
2 editing said remote search results according to a set of rules regarding information
3 that may be presented to the user.

1 4. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 selecting said remote information source from multiple information
3 sources.

1 5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said remote search is
2 conducted without the user being connected to the remote information source.

1 6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the remote information
2 source employs a user interface different from a user interface employed by the
3 local information source.

1 7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein said presenting comprises
2 displaying said merged search results with the user interface employed by the
3 local information source.

1 8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said requesting comprises
2 identifying to the remote information source a context in which to execute the
3 remote search.

1 9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein said context comprises an
2 identity of the user.

1 10. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein said context comprises an
2 identity of an organization operating the local information source.

1 11. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein said context comprises a
2 language.

1 12 (Canceled).

1 13. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said remote search and said
2 local search are performed at least partially in parallel.

1 14. (Currently amended) A computer readable storage medium storing
2 instructions that, when executed by a computer, cause the computer to perform a
3 computer-implemented method of facilitating a distributed search for a
4 procurement request, the method comprising:
5 receiving the procurement request from a user;
6 requesting a remote supplier to conduct a remote search to satisfy the
7 procurement request;
8 initiating a local search of a local information source;
9 receiving results of the remote search;
10 filtering results of the remote search by applying organizational
11 procurement controls to the results of the remote search, wherein the
12 organizational procurement controls include at least one of, an upper limit on a
13 price, an upper limit on a quantity, a prohibition against a given supplier, a limit to
14 a given brand, a limit to a given model, a limit on a delivery option, and a limit on
15 payment terms, and wherein the remote information source comprises an
16 electronic marketplace, whereby the organizational procurement controls can be
17 applied to results of the remote search which is performed by the remote supplier;
18 merging said remote search results with results of the local search; and
19 presenting said merged search results to the user.

1 15. (Currently amended) A method of conducting a distributed electronic
2 search for a procurement request concerning a desired procurement item,
3 comprising:
4 receiving from a user a description of an item the user desires to procure;
5 issuing a request to a remote supplier to conduct a first search for items
6 matching said description, without the user connecting to the remote procurement
7 information source;
8 providing the remote procurement information source with contextual
9 information for said first search;
10 performing a second search of a local procurement system for items
11 matching said description;
12 receiving a first set of results responsive to said first search;
13 filtering said first set of results by applying organizational procurement
14 controls to the first set of results of the remote search, wherein the organizational
15 procurement controls include at least one of, an upper limit on a price, an upper
16 limit on a quantity, a prohibition against a given supplier, a limit to a given brand,
17 a limit to a given model, a limit on a delivery option, and a limit on payment
18 terms, and wherein the remote information source comprises an electronic
19 marketplace, whereby the organizational procurement controls can be applied to
20 the first set of results of the remote search which is performed by the remote
21 supplier; and
22 presenting to the user, through a single interface, said first set of results
23 and a second set of results responsive to said second search.

1 16. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising:
2 authenticating one or more of the user and the local procurement
3 information system to the remote procurement information source.

1 17. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising:
2 selecting the remote procurement information source from a set of
3 procurement information sources.

1 18. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein said issuing comprises
2 providing the remote procurement information source with information for
3 identifying a context in which to execute the requested search.

1 19. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein said filtering comprises
2 removing from said first set of results any items that violate the procurement
3 rules.

1 20. (Original) The method of claim 19, wherein the procurement rules are
2 designed to restrict items that may be procured by the user.

1 21. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein said first search and said
2 second search are performed at least partially in parallel.

1 22. (Currently amended) A computer readable storage medium storing
2 instructions that, when executed by a computer, cause the computer to perform a
3 method of conducting a distributed electronic search for a procurement request
4 concerning a desired procurement item, the method comprising:
5 receiving from a user a description of an item the user desires to procure;
6 issuing a request to a remote supplier to conduct a first search for items
7 matching said description, without the user connecting to the remote procurement
8 information source;
9 providing the remote procurement information source with contextual
10 information for said first search;

11 performing a second search of a local procurement system for items
12 matching said description;
13 receiving a first set of results responsive to said first search;
14 filtering said first set of results by applying organizational procurement
15 controls to the first set of results of the remote search, wherein the organizational
16 procurement controls include at least one of, an upper limit on a price, an upper
17 limit on a quantity, a prohibition against a given supplier, a limit to a given brand,
18 a limit to a given model, a limit on a delivery option, and a limit on payment
19 terms, and wherein the remote information source comprises an electronic
20 marketplace, whereby the organizational procurement controls can be applied to
21 the first set of results of the remote search which is performed by the remote
22 supplier; and
23 presenting to the user, through a single interface, said first set of results
24 and a second set of results responsive to said second search.

1 23. (Currently amended) A system for facilitating a distributed search for
2 information for a procurement request, comprising:
3 a local information source configured to provide information to local users
4 through a first user interface;
5 a communication module configured to enable said local information
6 source to communicate with a remote supplier, wherein the remote supplier is
7 configured to provide information to users through a second user interface
8 different from the first user interface;
9 a set of rules regarding information that may be displayed to a first local
10 user; and
11 a processor configured to initiate, in response to a request from the first
12 local user:
13 a remote search of the remote information source; and

14 a local search of said local information source;
15 wherein results of said remote search are filtered by applying
16 organizational procurement controls to the results of the remote search, wherein
17 the organizational procurement controls include at least one of, an upper limit on a
18 price, an upper limit on a quantity, a prohibition against a given supplier, a limit to
19 a given brand, a limit to a given model, a limit on a delivery option, and a limit on
20 payment terms, and wherein the remote information source comprises an
21 electronic marketplace, whereby the organizational procurement controls can be
22 applied to results of the remote search which is performed by the remote supplier
23 and then merged with results of said local search for display to the first local user
24 through the first user interface.

1 24. (Original) The system of claim 23, further comprising:
2 authentication means for authenticating one or more of the system and the
3 first local user to the remote information source.

1 25. (Original) The system of claim 23, wherein said remote search and
2 said local search are performed in parallel.